



Digital Adoption Program Guidelines

Program Objective

The Atlantic Canada Aerospace & Defence Association (ACADA), with the support of the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA), is providing support to Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in the Aerospace, Defence, and Security industries for Digital Adoption projects.

ACADA's Digital Adoption Program ("the Program") aims to assist SMEs in furthering their digital transformation. Adopting and investing in digital best practices can help boost business capacity and improve operational efficiency and productivity.

The Program is intended to support SMEs that have already taken advantage of the Canada Digital Adoption Program (CDAP), or those that are not eligible for the Program. ACADA's funding is meant to augment the resources available through CDAP, not replace nor duplicate.

Eligible Companies:

To qualify for the Program, companies must meet the following criteria:

1. ACADA Membership:

- The company must be an active, paid member of ACADA in good standing.
- All membership and event fees must be paid in full.
- Eligibility is limited to **Industry Membership, Category A** only.

2. SME Definition:

- The company must meet the definition of an SME, having fewer than **500 full-time employees**.
- All incorporated SMEs in one of the four Atlantic provinces (Nova Scotia, Newfoundland and Labrador, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island) may apply. Additionally, the SME must have significant operations, such as facilities and/or offices, along with most of its workforce be located/situated in the Atlantic region.



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3. **New Digital Adoption Projects:**

- Only a new digital adoption project is eligible for funding.
- If the company has previously received funding, it must demonstrate **incremental progress** or upgrades from the earlier funded project.
- Reapplication for the same project or similar work without clear progress will not be considered.

4. **Multiple Applications:**

- Members may apply for multiple programs, but only **one** project (either certification or digital) will be eligible to receive funding.

5. **Project Cost:**

- The project must have a **minimum cost of \$5,000** to qualify for consideration.

Program Criteria

The Program may be used to identify digital gaps or to implement digital adoption.

Applicants may use any service provider they choose for the project, as long as the service provider is arm's length from the applicant, and they have the required skills and experience for the project.

ACADA encourages applicants to use Atlantic Canadian-based service providers, but it is not a requirement of the Program.

Projects Assisted

Projects that are eligible for consulting support for the Program will aim to support the SME with implementing new digital tools, strategies, and resources into their business. Projects may include:

- Process automation and optimization
- Managed service provider analysis and consultation
- Skills development and training
- Implementation of cybersecurity best practices
- Cybersecurity and data protection consulting advice



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- Digital marketing projects
- Improve user experience for online customers
- Other project deliverables discussed with individual SME (to be approved by ACADA).

Application Process

Interested SMEs may submit an application to ACADA for consideration. The application will be reviewed through a competitive assessment process. **Applicants must include the following items:**

- Company outline
- Company history
- Need for project
- Project details
- Benefit to company
- Benefit to industry/economy
- Past, present and future digitalization commitments
- Financial estimates
- Service provider information
- Service provider statement of work for the project (including project scope, timelines, and budget)

The main criteria for evaluation will be **Benefit to the company, industry and the economy through financial and environmental benefits, innovation, and/or future digitalization commitments** brought by the project intended.

Approved applicants will be advised of their acceptance to the Program and once accepted, may commence the project with the service provider.

Program Timeline

1. Application Period:

October 15, 2024 – October 28, 2024

Applications will be accepted during this period.

We encourage members to apply early to be considered.

Apply for the Digital Adoption Program [HERE!](#)



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2. Review Completion and Selection Date:

November 1, 2024

The initial review and selection process will take place.

If funding remains available after this date, further applications will be accepted.

3. Project Completion Deadline:

March 31, 2025

All projects **must** be completed by this date.

Terms of Incentive

- **Cost-Sharing:**

Approved projects will be cost-shared between ACADA and the SME. The maximum project cost eligible for support is \$18,000, with the SME responsible for 35% of the total cost.

(Example: For a project with a total cost of \$10,000, the SME's portion would be \$3,500.)

- **Eligible Costs:**

Only project costs specified in the approved application will be considered eligible for funding under this Program.

- **Payment Process:**

Upon project completion, ACADA will pay the Project Service Provider for the eligible costs outlined in the approved application. ACADA will then invoice the SME for their 35% share of the project cost, which will be due upon receipt.

- **Project Incompletion:**

If the project is not completed for any reason, the SME will be required to pay 50% of the total costs billed up to the point of project completion.

Status Reports and Completion Survey

Applicants will be required to provide status reports over the course of the Program, to ensure progress and alignment with project objectives. Upon completion of the project, participants in the project must complete ACADA's Program survey.